



"In a certain way, just as the spider produces the thread it glides along, you yourselves produce the time you need in order to do all that you must do, traveling along a thread that is only visible when looking backward, but can only be used moving forward"

René Daumal, *La Grande Beuverie*, 1938

In discussion of contemporary artistic practice, we use the term "time-based art" to refer to certain specific media and technical genres. But in fact what art form, in conception, execution or transmission, is not based in time? Whether it moves or is still, whether it is ostensibly ephemeral or ostensibly permanent (the difference in fact being unclear), is irrelevant: all art is essentially rooted in the passage of time -- time sought, time lost, time pursued, time regained -- to such an extent that Time itself might be said to be art's fundamental and enduring subject matter, regardless of the minutiae of materials and constraints of categorization.

Time -- conceptually and experientially, literally and metaphorically, explicitly and implicitly -- lies at the heart of the Francisco Ruiz de Infante's exhibition *La Línea de los Ojos (The Death Line)* at the Galería Elba Benítez. It is signified in measuring devices such as hourglasses, clocks and calendars; it is summoned in rhythmical, percussive sounds, like ticking clocks and snapping fingers; it is suggested in pulsing lights and fleeting, fading shadows. It is even invoked in the changing colors of the leaves of the trees in the gallery's courtyard, into which this exhibition extends during the slanting equinoctial light of autumn.

But Ruiz de Infante is an accomplished installation artist, to whom space is always a primary concern, and whose seemingly precarious yet in fact carefully orchestrated assemblages function like three-dimensional drawings or diagrams that simultaneously create and choreograph space. As a result, in *La Línea de los Ojos (The Death Line)*, time and space are presented -- again, as in choreography -- not as separate but rather as interdependent, a position acknowledged by quantum physics, but also verified by everyday experience. For instance, in *Amenecer Múltiple* (2014) -- an extensive work, consisting of multiple and interwoven sound, audio and structural components -- not only the viewer's perspective, but even the work itself changes and is changed depending on the viewer's presence. And in *Selva Húmeda (Vanitas)* (2014), video images filmed in a single complex space at different times are meticulously superimposed so as to form a kind of layered temporal "landscape" of an unsettled and unsettling domestic situation.

Taken as a whole, the exhibition thus becomes a sort of 'puzzle of projections' that give rise to a destabilizing temporal experience between perception (i.e. sensorial experience) and the remains of perception (i.e. memory of that sensorial experience). Time and place are made to meet in a paradoxical fashion, raising a series of questions: What is the difference between desire, and the desire to control? How far, in space or in time, does passion lie from power? In the presence of these

works, are you, the spectator, on the inside, or on the outside? Are you in front, or are you behind? Or have we perhaps ventured a bit too far into the thick of things?

Francisco Ruiz de Infante (Vitoria-Gasteiz, 1966) combines images, texts, sounds and objects into complex installations that embed advanced technology within rough-hewn materials, while at the same time infusing a rigorously critical conceptual framework with an assured poetic sensibility. His work has been exhibited at the Fundación Telefónica (Buenos Aires), ZKM (Karlsruhe), the Guggenheim Museum (Bilbao), the Musée d'Art Moderne (Paris), the Maison de l'Image (Geneva), the Reina Sofía Museum and many other venues internationally. His work forms part of collections such as the Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris), the Musée d'Art Contemporain de Montréal, Kunsthaus Zürich, JVC Collection (Tokyo), FRAC (Alsace, Champagne-Ardenne e Ile-de-France) or MUSAC (León). Ruiz de Infante is on the faculty of the Haute Ecole des Arts du Rhin (Strasbourg). *La Línea de los Ojos (The Death Line)* is Ruiz de Infante's third exhibition at the Galería Elba Benítez and forms part of the Apertura program in Madrid.

George Stolz

NOTE: In celebration of the new exhibition season at the Galería Elba Benítez, Ruiz de Infante and the choreographer Olga Mesa will present a site/time-specific performance entitled *Crepúsculo Vespertino* in the gallery's courtyard. The performances will take place at sunset (20:30 p.m.) on September 11th, 12th and 13th.

Aknowlegments:

Association Autour de la Terre / Centre des Rives (Vaillant, France)

Association Hors Champ / Fuera de Campo (Strasbourg, France)



ARTE_MADRID ASOCIACIÓN DE GALERÍAS DE ARTE